Damage to crops due to radiation from cell phone towers

3241. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per preliminary research carried out by some agricultural universities, it has been revealed that the electromagnetic radiation emanating from cell phone towers can damage the growth of agricultural crops and plants;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has since taken any steps to check such damage to agricultural crops and plants from towers of cell phones; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) No, Sir. To our knowledge, no study with respect to damage to the growth of agricultural crops and plants due to electromagnetic radiation emanating from cell phone towers have been conducted by any Agricultural University in India.

(b) to (d) Question does not arise.

Low production of pulses

3242. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is a largest producer of pulses in the world and also the largest importer of pulses as in the case of oilseeds and edible oils;

(b) whether India's pulse production average is 638 kg. per hectare against best-in-class countries like Canada which produces around 1800 kg, per hectare;

(c) whether a recent study by Tata Strategic Management Group has shown that by adopting best practices and increasing yield to higher levels, India can increase production of pulses 13 million tonnes per year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Tata Strategic Management Group in their report published in the Business Standard dated September 24, 2009 claimed that "there is a potential to produce over 37 million tones of pulses in the country". A copy of the report has also been received in the Ministry. The Tata Group has conducted study based on the best practices prevalent in other countries & has recommended for development of markets to ensure profitability; promotion of good agronomic practices; enhanced focus on R&D; area increase involving fallows & improvement in efficiency through aggregation for enhanced production of pulses.